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A Metropolitan Scene.

The eyes of your native New Yorker become dull and almost blind to the vast metropolitan machinery of life. Still more does he become gradually callous and oblivious to the fact that the coars which turn the great flywheels of New York existence are oiled with red, live blood. It is so with every metropolis. The dwellers get so that a hero or a victim is too common to deserve more than a hasty glance. Magazines prate wisely about "human interest" stories and "heart interest" tales as if one had to search to find them. They recall the girl wonder who was going to set the river afire with the genius in her writings, and child marvel that she was sent to MARK TWAIN to ask his advice as to the best spot on this planet to find local color. "Go round the block where you live," said he.

And so with "human interest" and "heart interest": there was plenty of both on Thursday down on the recreation pier at the foot of West Fifth street. THOMAS DOUGLASS, aged 4, went down there with his mother to get the air. But he had to play with the big boys and walk along the string-pole, and naturally fell into the water. What a pity a "movie" operator was not on the job. He could have made a film full of pictures of what? Just an ordinary metropolitan scene, with the machinery at work oiled with real blood.

The mother, she was the mother primal, that was all. She went to spring for her child, but a bystander pushed her aside and dropped his hat and coat and waited for the curly head of hair to rise to the surface of the waters. The second time the little body rose to the surface this bystander dived and had the limp little form under one arm. And by the time he struggled to the pier somehow Police-man NOAR was on duty with a lifeline to pull them up. See the machinery work? And somehow when they were on the pier Dr. RYKOVAN with an ambulance was there. More machinery. He revived the child. That's all. The story is told. And the bystander, the ordinary hero, why, he ran away and begged the crowd not to follow and congratulate him. But routine "metropolitan" machinery forced the policeman to get his name merely as a matter of detail for a report. It was an ordinary name, THOMAS BUTLER, of 92 Horatio street, and then he went along about his business. And the little child with his normal mother toddled home unconscious of the fact that for moments he had kissed the lips of death.

"England expects every man to do his duty," said NELSON, and the phrase is handed down the ages. But men do their duty every day in big cities and no fame goes to them. They are forgotten daily as the newspaper falls into the wastebasket.

Will This Ultimatum Be Sustained?

The subjoined ultimatum is quoted from the outpourings of President W. G. LEE of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen:

"Unless the Eastern railroad managers make an about face from their position, every conductor and trainman employed on the forty-three lines involved in the present dispute will be ordered to strike."

The position of the Eastern railroad managers is that in the arbitration proceedings brought about by the demands of the employees the subjects of wages and conditions of employment shall be taken up for consideration at the same time, and that in studying the programme submitted by the men the arbitrators shall also give heed to the suggestions coming from the roads. That this is unreasonable, improper, or "a condition tantamount to a breach of faith" we cannot see. Yet the men arrogantly declare that unless their demands and those only are submitted a strike will be called, and the phrase charging bad faith is used to indicate the position they take.

Thus the trainmen are put in the position of declaring that their demands, which if granted would benefit them greatly at the expense of the railroads, which means the public, and if denied would deprive them of nothing, may be arbitrated, but that no question not raised by themselves shall be put before the arbitrators.

This seems to be a simple proposi-

tion. Indeed, it is simple. The men want to play a game in which their plan is "heads we win, tails you lose." Is this the measure of arbitration as conceived by the railroad men of the country?

Friendly Advice to Governor William Sulzer.

Governor SULZER has demonstrated beyond the possibility of question his enthusiasm for direct, statewide, all inclusive primaries. Twice, with all the weapons at his command, he has attacked the legislative opposition to them. Twice he has been defeated. The issue is now automatically confided to the electorate. At the November election they can register their decision in their choice of members of the Assembly. As the voters are the ones in whose behalf this reform is urged the subject may with entire safety be left to them for final disposition.

Meguntine Governor SULZER has devoted to this propaganda a large part of his energy and labors, while at the same time endeavoring to keep abreast with the constantly rising tide of executive duties, important and pressing for attention. That the automobiles engendered in the course of his campaign have not reacted to the serious detriment of other projects nobody informed as to the situation will undertake to say. That the time consumed in the primary struggle might well have been profitably devoted to other purposes is obvious. That the further diversion of time and energy to the design, for which the Governor has already done all that platform pledges and personal honor require or suggest, is at present inadvisable WILLIAM SULZER'S good sense and political sagacity will unite in advising him.

It is not the only or chief duty of the Governor of New York to try to enforce on a stubborn Legislature his views of public questions. It is his constitutional function to recommend measures appealing to his sense of justice, right and expediency. But it is also his function to perform other duties, executive duties, the burden of which is laid on him by Constitution and statutes. The slightest or neglect of any of these duties is not to be recompensed by zealous and unmatched ardor in other fields. Governor SULZER has struggled valiantly, without regard to his own health or personal comfort, to apply to each department, bureau and enterprise all the time and study it required. That he has failed in any of the multifarious obligations devolving on his office we shall not say, but his best friends and most admiring adherents cannot deny that the extra load of primary reform has drawn heavily on his strength.

From all disinterested admirers of the Governor who are sincere in the desire to see him emerge from his first term with the same amount of popularity that marked his entrance into his present office he will receive the same counsel. He has done all that was humanly possible for direct primaries. Let him stand in this matter on the record he has been at such pains to make until another and more propitious day. Let him concentrate his faculties on the executive and administrative details of his office, which in number and consequence are sufficient to absorb the whole vitality of even the most robust man. Let him abandon for a period the political activities that have claimed so large a share of his efforts and concentrate all his gifts on those administrative problems which are of imperative moment to the State of New York to-day.

The Moonlight School.

Imagination seldom roasts in Government reports, and a style of visualizing figures grown wearisome by too generous indulgence in the Sunday supplements and the trade magazines takes on unwanted charms when it appears in their dignified, not to say solemn pages. From the United States Bureau of Education there comes to bless Bulletin, 1913, No. 20, Whole Number 530, "Literacy in the United States, and an Experiment for Its Elimination." In census language, the canvass of 1910 returned as illiterate 5,516,163 persons 10 years of age or over, or 7.7 per cent of the population so delimited.

The bureau writer waves his magic wand, and presto! this is "less by only a few thousands than the total population of 10 [and so forth] in all the New England States." Change! and it surpasses the combined populations of Boston, Baltimore, Washington, Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Louisville, New Orleans, St. Louis, Kansas City, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Seattle, Spokane, San Francisco and Los Angeles, a Homerian list. An interesting frivoly for the calculator mathematician, to check up the computation. To us, more thrilling to contemplate this mighty host, "with their banners of blackness and darkness inscribed with the legends of illiteracy, ignorance, weakness, helplessness and hopelessness," as the imaginative statistician lines them up, "in double line of march, at intervals of three feet," extending over a distance of 1,567 miles, more than twice the distance from Washington to Jacksonville, and marching twenty-five miles a day, requiring more than two months to pass a given point.

It must not be thought that because the sleekest, happiest man we ever knew could back a check as round as himself, though he could sign it only with X, his mark, we fall to appreciate the appalling significance of these facts and figures. Our smile is only for the pose of Government statistics in their newly assumed primary class dress.

Fashions change, even in the warfare on illiteracy. The old way was to work on the youngsters, while the older generation of ignorants died out. Now there are infant classes for the grownups.

In September, 1911, Mrs. CORA WILSON BREWSTER, superintendent of schools

in Rowan county, Kentucky, and her associates opened night schools, poetical in the vulgar "moonshine schools"; and with the very first bright evening came more than 1,200 pupils, men and women, to enroll. Eager youth was there, and tottering graybeards; from 18 to 86 they ranged. In two years the movement has grown steadily. It is hoped that an act of Congress may give the idea national application. Cited examples of its operation include the case of one middle aged man, new to the delights of the pen, who "was so fascinated by the ability to write his name that he wrote it over and over again for two whole days, and was the more elated at every stroke."

"From this school, under the instruction of an 18 year old girl, a beginner in the profession of teaching, a preacher 50 years of age was graduated in reading and writing, for the terms of graduation were only that he should be able to read his Bible and the newspaper with reasonable facility, and should write a legible letter, and both of these he now can do to his unspeakable pride and joy. He signed his name to the assessor's list, for the first time, after four nights instruction, and wrote the superintendent a legible, four page, enthusiastic letter within a period at the close of each sentence as large as a bird's eye, when he had been a pupil of the school but seven evenings."

"An aged father and mother, parents of fourteen children, all of whom had gone beyond the roof-tree, and grandparents of eighty-four grandchildren, learned to read and write, and absent ones, to their surprise and excessive joy, learned that father and mother had been attending Moonlight School and could read and write, and not only was a new world of communication opened to the aged couple but a new joy and a new uplift and a new dignity was given to their absent ones, making them, doubtless, better citizens of their adopted State."

One father and mother came into a school one night with six grown sons, three of whom were married, and all voters. Within two nights both parents and sons could write their names, and within two weeks they could all write a respectable letter.

"JOHN DEHART declares in his first letter that he would not take \$10,000 for what he has learned. Doubtless, besides the increased happiness and usefulness, the knowledge which he has gained will add that much to his earning capacity during the rest of his lifetime, for he is but 25 years old and belongs to a family of remarkable vigor and noted longevity. JOHN has come to realize his possibilities, and has caught a vision of higher achievements, and has enrolled as a regular scholar in the day school since the night school closed."

In the face of instances like these, cynic speculations on the morality of sowing the seeds of that darkest, deepest horror the cacophony scribbled and squealed, and there is room only for the heartiest endorsement of Rowan county's moonlight schools.

The five children killed in Philadelphia is an instance showing how careless some auto owners really are.—Brooklyn Democrat.

It is not so much that they are careless as that they suffer from the illusion that their presence at some objective point is of the utmost and immediate importance. They tear down to their office in order to be there in season to cock their feet up and read the newspaper. Or they tear out to a country club or to Far Rockaway lest the golf course or the ocean become a desert before they reach the spot. If certain types of automobile owners and chauffeurs would cool off and remember that they are more or less like the fly who sat upon the axle-tree and said "See what a dust I raise!" there would be far fewer persons killed by motor cars. It is speed, not carelessness, that does most of the deadly work.

The Consolidated Gas Company's new tunnel under the East River bed is admirable in intention, plan and construction. It will result in great economies to a progressive and prosperous public service corporation. Will it reduce the price of gas?

Grand Central Park reformed in his last days and quiet village the Metropolitan House. Investors unfamiliar with the selling of some of our gifted but ill directed citizens. Yet a worthy successor to him is not wanting. An ingenious but unscrupulous denizen of the lower East Side was caught recently offering for sale an option on the Brooklyn Bridge.

Of even greater interest than the final scenes of the New Jersey silk strike is the effect its management and conclusion will have on the precious crowd whose members compose the leadership of the Industrial Workers of the World.

TEN MILLION FOR NOTHING.

How like in Wages Helps, Retroactively, the Capitalist Class.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—It is surprising that "Economicus" is worrying over the likelihood of the laboring classes getting something for nothing. That we are getting it is according to the capitalist classes only. One cannot conceive a way by which anything can be taken from the capitalists to the benefit of the workers.

For example, see how this works out: In recent years the building trades have been strongly unionized. If by reason of the advance in wages in the building construction increases even as little as 10 per cent, the value of all the old buildings also increases 10 per cent. That means that in a city in which the buildings have a value of \$100,000,000 before the increase in wages those same buildings would be valued at \$110,000,000 after the increase. A gain of \$10,000,000 for nothing. M. P. C. PROVIDENCE, R. I., July 18.

Oberramergau.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: Permit me to answer Mr. Otto W. Fuhrmann's letter in yesterday's SUN in regard to Oberramergau.

THE OUTCAST OF THE SEAS.

A 2,000-Year-Old Stone Shark, and a Modern Monster That Nipped Off a Leg.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: I am glad to see that the shark is so popular and to learn his banking name, at sight of which paying tellers shudder. I hate to take his pieces of eight, but no man can afford to be stingy with the shark. I do not doubt for a moment "Main-top" yam of how he swam shoulder to shoulder with sea sharks in the waters of the Gulf, because I have seen Somali boys play tag with the same playful critters off Zella and Obok, and we all know the exquisite courtesy of the shark which in 1850 followed the Brandywine, fighting frigate, from San Francisco Bay to Sandy Hook 170 days, with Mr. Shark wishing Boatwain Peter Miller the top of the morning every day as sure as the sun rose or didn't. Probably we all have the sharks that destroy admiral "Main-top" immensely for the sturdy way he has attempted to rehabilitate the outcast of the seas.

But if we are wrong about the man eaters of the warm waters we have been wrong for a long time. I myself have seen on a facade of those wonderful stone ruins at Buro-Budor in Java the most perfect shark with the same playful critters down to the sea in ships which the graphic arts have preserved to unfold before the scolding eyes of this sceptical generation. There for 2,000 years at least life in which so many landlubbers have been involved and which "Main-top" denies.

To-day as in the yesterday that was two thousand years ago when the sculptor chiseled out his harrowing theme you see the startled swimmer, you almost hear his cry of agony and fear, the sinister pursuer turns over on his back, and you see his belly glistening white as he does in the pages of Smollett and of Marryat and of Clark Russell, and you see his belly glistening white as he does in the pages of Smollett and of Marryat and of Clark Russell, and you see his belly glistening white as he does in the pages of Smollett and of Marryat and of Clark Russell.

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HONESTY IN BUSINESS.

Is There More of It in Wall Street Than Among Merchants in General?

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: A correspondent refers to honesty in business as a sort of lost art and practised by few business men. I cannot agree with all of his letter, for in my experience I have found that there is more real honesty in Wall Street than in the general business community. By "Wall Street" I mean the business downtown that has rules and ethics made and supervised to a certain extent by the Stock, Cotton, Produce and Maritime exchanges.

And even under the law of those exchanges forbidding bucket shopping, splitting of commissions, washed sales and, there is trickery, fraud, deceit and actual robbery under the name of trade customs.

For example, a commission merchant sells for a customer May cotton at 10.54. He reports it by telegram to his Southern client as sold at 10.53 or 10.52, thus skinning the customer a point or two. As a point is one one-hundredth of a cent on a 100 bale contract it amounts to 10 cents. This done, the merchant then reports the day note the office 10.50 or 10.40. This, although against the rules, is done constantly—sometimes through dummy brokers to hide the operation.

Stock brokers who are not strictly honest at this time now and then. One stock broker I used to know, and who is wealthy, made a pot of money in that way in panicky or rush markets.

But on the whole the Wall Street type of merchants and brokers is more honest because of the ethics they are brought up under, than the classes of merchants who use false weights, false measures and false labels, and they abound all over the city and country and have no central authority like an exchange over them to check their rapacity.

One cotton mill man of my acquaintance told me that he frequently found in bales of cotton stripped and taken apart in the strip-house of the mill balls of iron, cobbles, stones, etc., which had been inserted in the cotton to make it heavier. He said that because there was usually too much red tape in their collection, but he had frequently changed from one cotton house to another when fraud got too heavy in percentage.

Another man in the market told me that some dairies were "all to the good" as to quality and quantity; likewise some of the butter and cheese merchants; but that there were lots of dishonest dealers in butter, cheese, eggs and dairy products, more than the general public could detect. The same objection applies to cloth merchants, drugs, patent medicines, etc. There are good and bad merchants, dealers and brokers mixed in the different grades. The right and proper way is to have no dealings with dishonest men.

BROOKLYN, July 18. N. R. BALISTER.

VICE CRUSADES.

A Comment Upon Bishop Greer's Article in The Sun.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: Will you permit a comment upon Bishop Greer's "ladder for reforming the social evil" as presented in your semi-monthly magazine section last Sunday.

The rungs of this ladder were cited: (1) "Legislation at the foot of the ladder." (2) "The power of public opinion." (3) "The influence of the Church on the general morals of the community."

It is for putting legislation at the foot of the ladder, and for nowhere mentioning the enforcement of that legislation, that I question the value of Bishop Greer's suggestions. There has been legislation for generations. Of late years there have been veritable "to burn." From one end of the country to the other we have been passing laws upon laws, inciting public opinion and stirring up the masses of the Church through so-called vice crusades; yet there is grave reason for believing that the end result of these crusades has been to stimulate rather than to check the evil.

The process already has made the omission that Bishop Greer makes, i. e., have overlooked the fact that an inefficient management of police department and courts, and a laxity of police records, provides the means and the cloak for fostering more social evils than the Church can undo in ten years.

For example, here in New York we have had many vice crusades. More recently we have had the publication of a volume by the Bureau of Social Hygiene describing in detail the commercial aspects of vice. We have had inspectors to jail and others toward the electric chair for grafting on vice. Yet, unless this city, the Church, public opinion and the makers of law see to it that the methods of dealing with vice are changed in line with the constructive recommendations of the Aldermanic committee we shall have had all of our excitement for nothing.

Director of the Bureau of Municipal Research.

NEW YORK, July 17.

ANOTHER HISTORIAN.

He Thinks Waterloo Was the Most Decisive Battle.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: Your correspondent H. J. Jackson writes that the battle of Waterloo was not a decisive battle. This statement is absurdly untrue. If there ever was a battle in this world's history that was decisive the battle of Waterloo was certainly that one. England had been fighting France, with little hope of victory, for over a hundred years. The following is a list in which the English, sometimes with allies, were victorious:

Sluys, 1297; Ramillies, 1706; Oudenarde, 1708; Malplaquet, 1709; Gibraltar, 1702; battle of the Nile, 1798; Acre, 1799; Copenhagen, 1801; Trafalgar, 1805; Corunna, 1809; Talavera, 1809; Badajoz, 1812; Salamanca, 1812; Vittoria, 1813; Waterloo, 1815; Pondicherry, 1760-1; Waterloo, 1815.

FERTILIZER FROM THE AIR.

Dr. Thomas H. Norton's Monograph on a Matter of Worldwide Concern.

Under the romantic title "Utilization of Atmospheric Nitrogen" the Bureau of Commerce and Labor, Department of Commerce and Labor, has caused to be printed at the Government Printing Office a monograph by Dr. Thomas H. Norton, American Consul at Chemnitz, Germany. This monograph deals solely with the problem of soil fertilization.

Dr. Norton sets forth at the outset the one of the chief services rendered by chemistry in the nineteenth century was to make plain the dependence of plant as well as of animal life on nitrogen. Because of this dependence the problem of the obtainable nitrogen supply seriously engaged the attention of economists. It was foreseen that at no distant time it would be impossible to supply the world's demands for "combined nitrogen," that is, in the form in which it can be used for soil fertilization or from which it can be converted for that purpose, unless means could be devised for extracting free nitrogen from the atmosphere at comparatively small cost.

He says that the nitrogen problem of the day is "almost unique in one respect, the material is abundant; in fact it is unlimited. The difficulty is to bring it into form available for use. Public sentiment in favor of instant action is so strong that the known volume of nitrate bearing substance, not counting the atmosphere, is sufficient to supply the demand for perhaps a little more than fifty years. He quotes high authorities to the effect that with the annual increase in consumption the world's supply would be exhausted as early as 1917. After that the starvation problem for lack of nitrogen as a fertilizer would be staring the world's population in the face.

Regarding the unlimited supply of nitrogen, if only it could be converted into a form for use, Dr. Norton's report makes reference to the fact that nitrogen constitutes 78 per cent of the volume of the earth's atmosphere and 75.5 per cent of its weight. It is estimated that the volume of air resting upon each square yard of the globe's surface contains 5.8 metric tons of about 2,204 pounds each of nitrogen in its elementary state, and that the atmosphere nitrogen above one square yard of land is about 20,000,000 tons, and that the world would require in half a century at the present rate of consumption. To extract from this enormous supply the amount required for fertilizing the soil would be obtained and used profitably is the problem which has engaged and is engaging many of the leaders in the science of chemistry.

Dr. Norton quotes an authority as saying that in 1858 the broad eaters of the world numbered about 516,000,000 and that they were increasing at the rate of 6,000,000 a year. This authority estimated that it would require 100,000,000 tons of nitrogen to feed the world through intensive agriculture by the necessary use of nitrogenous compounds so to increase the yield of cereals to the acre as to put off the danger line far into the next century.

Dr. Norton says that the synthetic production of nitric acid from the atmosphere is a "highly specialized process, dependent for the time being on exceptionally cheap sources of electricity." If the atmosphere is to be the future cheap source of electricity then the earth's envelope is not only to furnish the substance for fertilizing the soil but is to furnish also the agent for making that substance available.

In conclusion Dr. Norton says: "It can be regarded as beyond doubt that the present achievements of applied chemistry in this field render it possible for America, and other countries, to begin to face the threatened exhaustion of the nitrate deposits of Chile and the demands attendant upon a rapidly growing population without any feeling of apprehension. The processes already in use show that there is no early danger of a nitrogen famine. The continual perfection of the processes and the appearance at frequent intervals of novel additions, such as well as the popularization of the new form of combined nitrogen, all point to a steady movement forward and to the assurance that the world's supply of nitrogen will be furnished on an increased scale without advance in cost above existing rates as fast as the demand is evident."

Dr. Norton was especially detailed from his post in Saxony to the Department of Commerce and Labor, making the investigations on which his report is based. He is himself an authority in chemistry, having specialized in that science since he studied at Heidelberg. He visited the principal nitrate works in which he could get information and his technical descriptions of methods are valuable to all who take a scientific interest in the matter. The report is designated by the Government as Special Agents Series No. 52.

MAN IS LIKE A CANDLE.

Whither Did His Essence Go While He Was Burning?

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: There is a tendency in our sceptical age to deny the future life of the soul. A man can be seen taking for his motto: "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." I believe that is a great mistake. The Good Book says: "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." Prov. xx. 27. As the burning of a candle slowly but surely brings about the final extinction of the candle, so it is with the life of man. The very first breath of his existence is a day nearer to death, which must inevitably ensue as soon as the vital force has burned itself out. Before this happens many a man asks himself, "What will become of me after my life is extinguished? Whither shall I go then?" This question, however, is a foolish one and is no more justified than if the candle should burn and say: "Where will I go after I cease to burn?"

The real question is not as regards the future but should be directed toward the past. Not "Whither shall I go?" but "Whither did I go while I was burning or living?" would be the correct form of the question. Man is not dying at the end of his years, but he is rather dying every day of his life. His force of life is being spent by every action he makes, and by every motion he makes. Where does that force go? My answer is that as there is no force in the universe which can ever disappear altogether, so the vital force of man is never lost altogether. The sparks of life which are burning in every human soul do never become entirely extinct, but rather return to the great source of the heavenly fire from which they have come.

NEW YORK, July 18. S. COHEN.

Philosophy and Platitude.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: The "Manhattan Philosopher" says philosophy does not pay. It certainly does not, and never did not even in the days of Socrates and Aristotle. But it will tell him what pays—platitude.

Let a man only know how to string platitude—the more platitudinous the better—and he is sure to be a success in the public office; then all he has to do is go on the lecture platform and his fortune is made.

NEW YORK, July 17. STINNA.

Sequentially.

"In the long run we get the things that are best for us." Best seller slogan.

We do, we do—I don't want to be ruled—Even if it is penal servitude!

L. T. H.

Eight short stories in Harper's Magazine for August, with the continuation of Mr. Humphrey Ward's serial, are among the material for a fiction number among the writers are: Mrs. W. K. Freeman, Cora Harris and Percival Gibbon. Benson J. Lossing's account of the battle of Lake Erie is reprinted. Sir William Ramsay explains the mystery of the "hot air" balloons. Rhodes describes Carlsbad and S. Graham the banks of the Jordan, and A. M. Low discusses great stories. There are five poems.

MRS. ZABRISKIE IN SING SING CRUSADE

Is Moved by "Sun's" Report to Offer Aid for Removal of Convicts.

MAY GET RELIEF BY LAW

Edwin O. Holter Thinks Present Crowding Violates the State Constitution.

It was Mrs. Cornelius Zabriskie of 446 Carroll street, Brooklyn, who was so moved by THE SUN's account of conditions at Sing Sing prison that she wrote from her summer home in Rhode Island to Edwin O. Holter of 40 Broadway offering \$500 to help move some of the men to Great Meadow prison farm. Mr. Holter referred Mrs. Zabriskie's offer to Leon C. Weinstein, New York city member of Gov. Sulzer's commission to get a new prison as quickly as possible.

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